

# **MEDIA ADVISORY**

## **Office of Attorney General Terry Goddard**



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Attorney General Goddard sends \$373,022 to Cochise County from drug bust forfeiture**

(Phoenix, Arizona—November 18, 2003) Attorney General Terry Goddard announced today that his office will deliver a \$373,022.23 check to Cochise County law enforcement agencies as a result of a final order by the Superior Court of Arizona forfeiting vehicles and property to the State of Arizona.

Five real properties and four vehicles were seized during drug busts in Douglas and Southern California. The drug bust resulted from a cocaine and marijuana smuggling organization operated from Mexico into Arizona and California by Miguel Farias, a.k.a. Miguel Farias Alvarez, and the Amado Carrillo-Fuentes organized crime enterprise. The drug ring was investigated by the Cochise County Border Alliance Group Task Force and its constituent agencies in Southern Arizona.

Two commercial buildings, one each in Douglas and Lake Elsinore, CA, three residences in Douglas, and four vehicles including a Mercedes, were forfeited and sold as a result of these drug and money laundering cases prosecuted by the Arizona Attorney General's Office. In addition to the \$373,022.23 check sent to Cochise County, \$126,977.77 was retained by the Attorney General's Office to pay the expenses of prosecution of this case and for use in pending drug investigations and prosecutions.

The money laundering and drug smuggling organization was located in Mexico, where it smuggled cocaine and marijuana into the U.S., and invested the proceeds from those drug offenses into real property in Douglas and California.

Attorney General Goddard praised the work of the law enforcement agencies which investigated these cases, including the Cochise County Border Alliance Group (BAG) Task Force (headed by Lt. Frank Martinez of the Cochise County Sheriff's Office), the BAG Task Force Strategic Unit (headed by Sgt. Steve Tritz of the Arizona Department of Public Safety), the Cochise County Sheriff's Dept., the Department of Public Safety (DPS), the United States Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) of the Department of Homeland Security, and the Special Investigations Section of the Arizona Attorney General's Office. Goddard particularly wanted to recognize the work of agents Rene Valencia of DPS, Linda Bergevin and Arturo Bernal of the Attorney General's Office, ICE Agent Humberto Rodriguez and Assistant Attorneys General Sandra L. Janzen and Charles R. Johnson with the Financial Remedies Section, the prosecutors with the Attorney General's Office who obtained the forfeiture judgment.

*Media outlets: If you need a copy of the judgment or any other related case documents, please contact the Press Office*